NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. Aug. 2002)

OMB No. 1024-0018

VLR 4/15/8
NRHP draft

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House, Additional Documentation

other names/site number The William Wirt House, VDHR file # 127-0042

2. Location

street & number 2 North Fifth Street not for publication N/A

city or town Richmond vicinity N/A

state Virginia code VA county Richmond code 760 zip code 23219

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally X statewide ___ locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official — April 15, 2008 — Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ See continuation sheet.
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
- ___ public-local
- ___ public-State
- ___ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X building(s)
- ___ district
- ___ site
- ___ structure
- ___ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
0	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1, listed in 1970

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Commerce/Trade Professional

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling
Commerce/Trade Professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

EARLY REPUBLIC / Federal

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick
roof tin
walls brick
other marble steps, wood porch, wood entablature, stone lintels, marble steps, and first floor porch

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

____ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

__X_ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

__X_ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

____ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

____ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
____ B removed from its original location.
____ C a birthplace or a grave.
____ D a cemetery.
____ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
____ F a commemorative property.
____ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) **(same as original)**

__Art / Architecture_____
__Literature_____
__Politics / Government_____
__Social Humanitarianism_____

Period of Significance __1808-1817 **(originally listed as 19th century)**_____

Significant Dates _____1808-09, 1816-17_____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)___William Wirt_____

Cultural Affiliation ___N/A_____

Architect/Builder ____Unknown_____

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_X_ previously listed in the National Register
___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
___ designated a National Historic Landmark
_X_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _VA-113 / HABS, VA-44-RICH 2__
___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data
_X_ State Historic Preservation Office: __Department of Historic Resources_____
_X_ Other State agency: __The Library of Virginia_____
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
_X_ Other
Name of repository: _The Maryland Historical Society; The Virginia Historical Society___

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property ___1/4 acre_____

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1 18	284399	4157419	2		

__ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

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name/title__Bryan Clark Green, Architectural Historian; Jennifer Parker, District/Register Reviewer___
organization____Department of Historic Resources_____ date___July 2007, April 2008_____
street & number____2801 Kensington Avenue_____ telephone__(804) 367-2323_____
city or town____Richmond_____ state__VA_ zip code __23221_____

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Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.
Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name __Mr. Aubrey Bowles_____
street & number_ 2 North Fifth Street_____ telephone_____
city or town___Richmond_____ state__VA___ zip code _23219_____

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Description from the 1969 Nomination

The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is a two-story, hipped roof structure constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond with English bond below the water table. The three bays on either side of the entrance are formed into octagonal-ended or three-sectioned bow front projections with a wooden, two-level porch arcade screening the central space. The porch floor and entrance steps are in marble and the windows have scored stone sills. Other stylistic accents are the brick belt course between the floors and the deep eaves with long, narrow brackets. The central hall plan features the octagonal room on the south with a rectangular room behind and a larger single room across the hall. The small stair hall at the rear of the central hall is defined by a large, rectangular opening. Although the original mantels have been replaced by marble ones which date from the mid-nineteenth century, most wood and plaster trim remains. Especially fine is that in the south octagonal room which features a frieze and cornice detailing around the ceiling in geometrical patterns; the doorway to the hall uses flower swags and urns to decorate the pilasters, frieze and cornice. The hallway has architrave door framings with a frieze above decorated in an octagon pattern. Another interesting feature is the arch on the second level incorporating sliding doors which separates the two rooms on the north side of the hall. Frame and brick additions have been made to the rear, and several rooms on both floors have closet space added.

Additional Summary Description

The William Wirt House (built 1808-1809, located at 2 North Fifth Street in Richmond, Virginia) is Richmond's only surviving double-bowed house built during the Federal era. Once part of a constellation of twenty-five other bowed houses in Virginia's capital, the William Wirt House is the only one that remains. While the house withstood a series of unsympathetic 19th and early-20th century uses, the present owner has successfully embarked on a now decade-long restoration of the highest caliber. Gently and carefully, the present owner has restored missing features and returned the house to its appearance as the distinctive residence occupied by William Wirt, America's longest-serving Attorney General.[1]

Detailed Description

Exterior

The William Wirt House is a two-story, hipped roof urban mansion constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond with English bond below the water table. The three bays on either side of the entrance are formed into octagonal-ended or three-sectioned bow front projections with an Adamesque, wooden, two-level loggia screening the central space. The Adamesque arched portico, with its elongated orders – Tuscan on the first floor, Doric on the second -- not only gave the exterior of the house an exceptional central composition, but it affords two additional exterior rooms. Double doors framed access both levels of the loggia with fanlights above. The first-floor porch floor and entrance steps are in marble and the windows on the front and side elevations have scored stone sills. Other features are the brick belt course between the floors and the deep eaves with long, narrow brackets. A standing-seam metal roof covers the building.

Interior

In plan, the William Wirt House departs from that of Virginia's center-hall dwellings in that it is asymmetrical and incorporates polygonal rooms. The southern side of the house is deeper than the northern side. While the northern side houses a single, large, polygonal-ended room on each floor, the southern side contains a pair of rooms, the front room octagonal, the rear rectangular. The small, center stair hall extends only to the depth of the shallower, northern side of the house.

The finest room in the house is the octagonal parlor on the first floor, inside the southern bow. The eight walls of room contain four windows, one doorway, one marble chimneypiece, and two "apparent windows." Apparent windows are areas of interior walls that simulate real windows by using mirror panes framed in window casements divided by glazing bars. The apparent windows are located on either side of the chimneypiece and

directly across from exterior windows so as to maximize light by reflection. The octagonal parlor also features relief decoration. An elaborate plaster cornice incorporates diamond and octagonal motifs. The frieze of the cornice was adapted from plate XLIIII [sic] of William Pain's The Practical Builder (London, 1774). The door case features delicate composition work with fruit and flower baskets, flower swags, pineapples, and urns. This is the only architectural decoration in the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House that was made of composition ornament. The door frames are elaborated with octagonal motifs derived from plate XLI of Pain's The Carpenter's and Joiner's Repository (London, 1778). The room also features paneled wainscoting and a detailed ceiling medallion. The plaster ceiling medallions in the octagonal parlor were derived designs by Daniel Raynerd published as plate 36 in Asher Benjamin's The American Builder's Companion (1827). While the original ceiling modillion was removed (probably at the time the house was piped for gas fixtures), ultrasonography directed by the present owner confirmed the locations of glue points, which conform to the Reynard medallion. The room was originally papered with Dufour's Cupid & Psyche, which has been reinstalled.

The dining room is located directly behind the octagonal parlor on the south side of the house. This rectangular room is decorated with an anthemion frieze in the plaster cornice, a chair rail, and marble chimneypiece. Glue points show the original ceiling medallion similar to the oval one in the Philadelphia house "Rockland." The cornice and frieze were adopted from Plate XLI of William Pain's The Practical Builder (London, 1774) based on fragments found in well and ghost marks on walls. The current frieze is a reproduction, modeled (under the direction of the present owner) after fragments recovered after an earlier owner removed it. The triangular spaces left over behind the octagonal walls of the parlor were utilized as service areas for the dining room. Built-in cabinets were used for storage of dishes and utensils. The doorways to these spaces were narrow but with arched openings; doors were never attached to these cases. Three windows light this room, two on the south wall, one on the north. An additional south window lights the triangular service space in the southeast corner of the room. As in the octagonal parlor, the plaster ceiling medallions in the dining room were derived designs by Raynerd published as plate 36 in Benjamin's American Builder's Companion (1827). Again like in the octagonal parlor, the original ceiling modillion was removed (probably at the time the house was piped for gas fixtures), ultrasonography likewise confirmed the locations of glue points, which conformed to the Reynard medallion.

The third first floor reception room is the north parlor, also known as the library. This room was polygonal, with a rectangular end and a semi-octagonal front. The two door cases (the second, a false door to balance the first) are carved wood using a diamond motif frieze that matched that of the plaster cornice in the octagonal parlor, though much narrower. Like the octagonal parlor and the dining room, the frieze of the door frames was adapted from plate XLIIII [sic] of William Pain's The Practical Builder (London, 1774). The room also features a pair of windows on the rear wall flanking the marble chimneypiece.

The stair hall separates the octagonal parlor and dining room from the north parlor. The hall's decoration consists of the front entry doorcase, hall doorcases, and the staircase. A mid-nineteenth century replacement of the front entry resulted in the loss of the original doorcase. No indication of its original treatment survived. The original doorcases for the other three hall doorways remain, however. As in the dining room, the door frames are elaborated with connecting octagonal motifs carved of wood derived from plate XLI of Pain's The Carpenter's and Joiner's Repository (London, 1778). The staircase has delicate scroll brackets at the end of each riser, and each riser is marbelized to resemble King of Prussia marble. The stair was modeled after plate LXVIII of Pain's The Practical Builder, including the balusters and the scroll brackets. On the base of the stair railing on the second floor, the Greek key pattern is adapted from plate XLI of Pain's The Practical Builder. A modified version of the Rockland medallion was identified by glue points as being round, not oval. Cornice and frieze from Plate XLI of Pain's The Practical Builder were based on fragments found in well and ghost marks on the walls.

The second-floor rooms are treated much simpler than the more public first floor rooms. The second-floor octagonal chamber, located directly above the first-floor octagonal parlor, is simply decorated with a small marble chimneypiece and chair rail. There is no cornice. The octagonal chamber, unlike the octagonal parlor below it, made direct use of the corner spaces behind the octagon. Instead of apparent windows, these spaces

have doors. The south angled wall opens into a small triangular closet; the south angled wall forms a connection to the room behind the octagonal chamber, the dining room chamber. The dining room chamber is also plainly decorated with a small marble chimneypiece and chair rail. There is no cornice.

The north parlor chamber or principal bed chamber is the most complex room on the second floor. This room was the same size as the north parlor below, but it has wide arched openings running north and south to divide the bowed area from the rest of the room. The bowed area is further divided into three sections, two closets and a sitting area between them. The closets are located on either side of the arch in the angled sides of the bow. Each closet has shelves and a window for light. The front bow window and the two rear windows in the west wall of the chamber area light the entire room.

The cellar areas are more problematic, due to twentieth-century alterations that included use as an office and bookstore. The original kitchen was located below the dining room. The space below the north parlor was divided into two rooms by a wooden wall. The bowed room likely served as a root cellar since large ceiling hooks remain, indicating that the room was used for food storage. The rear room was probably used as a storeroom or servants quarters.

All original outbuildings, except part of one, were destroyed in the early twentieth century, when the property to the rear was subdivided and built upon. Since the area to the north of the house still remains and the subsequent insurance policies after the Wirt's departure show the existence of the outbuildings well into the 19th century, there is a potential archaeological project and possible reconstruction of the outbuildings as they existed during Wirt's residence. However, archaeology has not been thoroughly explored at this time and is not being considered for this updated documentation.

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Statement of Significance from the 1969 Nomination

The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House was built in 1808-09 by Michael Hancock who sold the property in 1814. In 1816 William Wirt (1772-1834) purchased the house and lived there until 1818 when he moved to Washington as Attorney General of the United States under James Monroe. While living in the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House, he completed his famous *Life of Patrick Henry*, one of the first great biographies in American literature. Wirt was a distinguished public figure of the times, being noted both for his legal prowess as well as his success as an author. Besides his success as the first biographer of Patrick Henry, Wirt wrote the *Letters of the British Spy*, as well as other articles for the newspapers. He also served in the House of Delegates and as Attorney General of Virginia before being appointed Attorney General of the United States. Upon moving to Washington, Wirt rented his house for a few months and then sold it to Benjamin Tate, former Mayor of Richmond. At his death in 1821, Tate left the property to his son, Joseph Tate, who served as Mayor of Richmond from 1826 until his death in 1839. In 1846 the heirs of Joseph Tate sold the property which eventually passed into the hands of William Palmer who ran a successful agricultural implement store. The house later passed into the hands of his daughter, Emma Palmer Caskie (Mrs. James Caskie) who lived there until her death in 1941. The house now serves a s the headquarters of the Richmond Chapter of the American Red Cross. The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is a sophisticated example of the Federalist style and exhibits the Latrobian characteristics of low roof pitch, deep eaves with narrow brackets, and the use of geometric shapes in the facade plan, interior room arrangement, and detailing. It bears a strong relationship to Point of Honor in Lynchburg in these characteristics and, along with the Wickham-Valentine House, and to a lesser extent the Ann Carrington House on Church Hill, is one of the three remaining Richmond houses which clearly shows the breakup of the Georgian formality into the more personal Federalist refinement. Even more significant is the fact that the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is the only survivor in Richmond of the three-sectioned bay motif as a Federalist theme, a motif, as described in 1850, that "seems to have affected a large number of the homes of the city of any great age, giving them and it a singular experience."

Additional Statement

The original nomination checked the areas of art, literature, politics, and social humanitarianism with a level of statewide significance in 1969. This National Register nomination adds to the descriptive information on the house architecturally and to the history of William Wirt during his time at the house while maintaining the level of statewide significance under both Criteria B and C. The Period of Significance was originally listed as the 19th century, but has been clarified for this nomination from 1808, the year of construction, to 1817, the year that Wirt lived in the house whilst writing the Patrick Henry biography and before his move to Washington, DC to become Attorney General. The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is the only surviving residence of William Wirt and, as such, serves as an apt monument to William Wirt and his literary accomplishments.

Criterion B (William Wirt Justification)

From 1816-1817, the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House was the home of William Wirt, an influential yet now-overlooked author, lawyer, historian, and Attorney General of the United States. As an attorney, Wirt first rose to fame in 1800 as the youngest member of the defense team (he had practiced law but eight years) in the trial of controversial newspaperman James Callender, prosecuted under the antagonistic Alien & Sedition Acts. His reputation expanded with his successful defense in the high-profile George Wythe murder case in 1806. In 1807, Wirt became the youngest of the prosecution team in the treason trial of former Vice-President Aaron Burr. The prosecution team included Wirt, U.S. Attorney for Virginia George Hay, Virginia Lt. Gov. Alexander MacRae, and much of the legal strategy came directly from Thomas Jefferson; the defense team included former U.S. Attorney General Edmund Randolph and influential Richmond lawyer John Wickham. The case was tried before Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court John Marshall in Circuit Court held in Richmond. While Burr was acquitted, Wirt's four-hour summation of the "Blennerhassett Affair" remains a notable example of courtroom oratory.

As an author, Wirt first achieved notice for the satirical series of essays *The British Spy* (1802) and later for *The Old Bachelor* (1812). Wirt's most lasting literary and historical contribution was his monumental *Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry* (1817), which required 12 years to complete and is the basis on which much of the knowledge of Patrick Henry rests. Wirt consulted many prominent Virginians who knew Henry, including Thomas Jefferson, and Governor Mann Page. He also consulted letters, records of the General Court, and archives of the state in attempt to reconstruct the words of Patrick Henry, including Henry's most famous, his "Give me liberty, or give me death" oration. No other record of this speech exists.

As a work of historical scholarship, however, Wirt's Patrick Henry biography is extremely problematic. Wirt himself acknowledged that he had redrawn his subject in a more positive light as an attempt to inspire patriotic sentiment amongst the men of Virginia, to whom the book was dedicated. With little written material with which to work, Wirt was forced to rely on sketchy recollections of events from decades before. Moreover, Henry was less a historical figure than a cult of personality and, as such, an incredibly polarizing figure. His fame was based on oratory and political prowess rather than on philosophical or political writings. Wirt's manuscript therefore was primarily based on the ephemera of unscripted and unrecorded speeches as recollected by Henry's elderly political cronies and foes both, a combination of factors which could, by no means, result in a true representation of Wirt's enigmatic subject. Nor, for that matter, could these factors allow for an accurate recounting of Henry's speeches given some 40 years prior to their initial publication.

Realizing this, Wirt abandoned the notion of creating a true likeness of Henry. Instead, as he put it, he would fill in the holes with "all the plaster of Paris"[2] he could muster. The result was a Romantic hero and a work of proto-Romanticism in a city whose literary links to that movement would result in the development of literary types of both national and international significance – types for which Wirt laid the groundwork several decades before. Wirt's *Life of Patrick Henry* is important as a literary achievement, as a key text in the development of a Revolutionary mythology and, despite its many flaws, as an important historical record of Patrick Henry.

Immediately following the publication of *Patrick Henry*, Wirt was named U.S. Attorney General, and relocated to Washington, D.C. There, he served presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams as Attorney General from 1817 to 1829, becoming the first Attorney General to hold Cabinet rank. Wirt argued several cases that came to define American jurisprudence. In the course of his career, Wirt argued some 174 cases before the Supreme Court. The William Wirt House is the only surviving historic resource associated with the life of William Wirt.

Though largely forgotten today, William Wirt exerted a powerful formative influence upon our understanding of Patrick Henry's role in the American Revolution.

The county of Wirt, West Virginia (then, Virginia) was named in honor of William Wirt in 1848, 15 years after his death.

Historic Background

Born 8 November 1772 as the son of an innkeeper in Bladensburg, Maryland, Wirt was orphaned by the time he was eight years old. He was raised by an aunt and educated in a series of boarding schools in Georgetown. After a stint as a tutor, at the age of 20 Wirt moved to Virginia and was soon -- with minimal training -- admitted to the Virginia Bar. As a young man, he was befriended by Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe, and encouraged and mentored by them. Through the instigation of his mentors, Wirt was appointed Clerk of the Virginia House of Delegates when he was 28, and became Chancellor of the Eastern District of Virginia at age 30. He served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1808-10. In 1816, President Madison appointed him U.S. District Attorney for Virginia. From 1817 to 1829, Wirt served two presidents, Monroe and John Quincy Adams, as U.S. Attorney General. He was the first Attorney General to hold cabinet rank and the first to keep a permanent record of his decisions. Throughout his life, Wirt maintained a busy legal practice; between cases argued as Attorney General and in private practice, Wirt argued some 174 cases before the Supreme Court, including many which form the foundation of American legal culture.[3]

The Patrick Henry Biography

Wirt's most lasting literary and historical contribution was his monumental *Sketches of the Life and Character of Patrick Henry* (1817), which required 12 years to complete and is the basis on which much knowledge of Patrick Henry rests. Wirt consulted many prominent Virginians who knew Henry, including Thomas Jefferson, Governor Mann Page and also consulted letters, records of the General Court, and archives of the state in attempt to reconstruct the words of Patrick Henry, including the most famous, his "Give me liberty, or give me death" oration. No other record of this speech exists.

The Patrick Henry biography was intended to be the first of a series on the Founding Fathers, but Wirt's law career diverted him from his literary pursuits, and his plans to retire and devote himself to letters was thwarted by his death at age 62. In myriad ways, the Henry biography came to define Wirt's life. Wirt threw himself into the project with zeal, and a sense that the connections with the Revolutionary generation – as embodied in the character of his esteemed former father-in-law – were being severed daily, as the leaders of the movement found their way inexorably to the grave. Wirt described the beginnings of the project:

> It was in the summer of 1805, that the design of writing this biography was first conceived. It was produced by an incident of feeling, which, however it affected the author at the time, might now be thought light and trivial by the reader; and he shall not, therefore, be detained by the recital of it. The author knew nothing of Mr. Henry, personally. He had never seen him; and was of course compelled to rely wholly on the information of others. As soon, therefore, as the design was formed of writing his life, aware of the necessity of losing no time in collecting, from the few remaining coevals of Mr. Henry, that personal knowledge of the subject which might ere long be expected to die with them, the author dispatched letters to every quarter of the state in which it occurred to him as probably that interesting information might be found; and he was gratified by the prompt attention which was paid to his inquiries.[4]

Wirt consulted many prominent Virginians who knew Henry, including Thomas Jefferson, Governor Mann Page, and he examined Edmund Randolph's manuscript history of Virginia. Wirt also consulted newspapers from 1765 to the close of the Revolution, to correct dates and verify facts, read original letters, consulted records of the General Court, and perused the archives of the state. Among his correspondents was Thomas Jefferson – no friend of Henry – who supplied information and read the completed manuscript. As Wirt described his participation, "Mr. Jefferson, too, has exercised his well-known kindness and candor on this occasion; having not only favored the author with a very full communication in the first instance; but assisted him, subsequently and repeatedly, with his able counsel in reconciling apparent contradictions, and clearing away difficulties of fact."[5]

Wirt became consumed by the project, viewing his work as the establishment of a vital connection to the dead and dying heroes who birthed the new nation.[6] He began collecting materials in 1805, but it was not until 1814 that he had amassed and corrected enough source material to begin assembling in earnest Henry's life.

> Although it has been so long since the collection of these materials was begun, it was not until the summer of 1814 that the last communication was received. Even then, when the author sat down to the task of imbodying his materials, there were so many intricacies to disentangle, and so many inconsistencies, from time to time, to explain and settle, and that, too, through the tedious agency of cross-mails, that his progress was continually impeded, and has been, to him, most painfully retarded.[7]

While deep in the throes of the *Henry* manuscript, in January 1816, Elizabeth Wirt was looking for a house in the Monroe Ward of Richmond, and wrote her husband of the neighborhood.[8] What she found was the house built by Michael Hancock, which soon became the Wirt's. It was in this house –known as the William Wirt House – that Wirt completed the formidable task of compiling and editing the biography. And it was in this house that Wirt completed the biography and finished the very last portion, the preface, on 5 September 1817.

It is difficult to underestimate the importance of Wirt's biography of Patrick Henry, a biography that came to fruition in the Wirt house. Henry left behind few papers, and his most important speeches and courtroom orations were never written down – by Henry or anyone else. Without Wirt's twelve-year pursuit of the life of Henry, we would know little of what Henry said. Wirt saw Henry as the embodiment of the spirit of the Revolutionary generation, a John the Baptist for those who sought independence. As Wirt described Henry: "His was a spirit fitted to raise the whirlwind, as well as to ride in and direct it."[9] All of Henry's most well-known pronouncements, such as Henry's famous belief that he had 'but one lamp by which his feet were guided; and that lamp was the lamp of experience'. He knew of no way of judging of the future but by the past"[10] (the words inscribed on the façade of the Virginia Historical Society) are known only through Wirt's reconstruction of them. But none of Henry's speeches are more famous than that loosed in St. John's Church, Richmond, on 20 March 1775.

Wirt's account of "Give me Liberty …"

By 1775, boycotts of British goods had spread throughout Britain's American colonies. Virginia's royal governor, John Murray, fourth earl of Dunmore, had convened the House of Burgesses in November 1774, but then prorogued, or dissolved it when he learned that several of its members were leaders of the boycott. This had happened before, and the Burgesses had reconvened as private citizens in convention at the Raleigh Tavern in Williamsburg. Late in the winter of 1774–1775, however, they decided to meet in Richmond, far from the grasp of Dunmore.

The delegates chose to hold their meeting in the Henrico Parish church (later St. John's Episcopal Church), a simple frame structure completed in 1741. The 120 or so members of the second revolutionary convention crowded into the church on March 20, 1775, and began to reconsider their options, since the nonimportation association, or boycott, had failed to stir Parliament and the Crown. Patrick Henry, member for Hanover County and a fiery orator, offered a resolution to put the colony into a defensive posture by raising an armed force. When several conservative delegates objected to his resolution as a virtual declaration of war, Henry responded with a speech that galvanized the convention.

According to Wirt, he began quietly, pointing out that reasonable men might hope that the assembly's repeated remonstrances would move the King and Parliament to lift the burdens they had imposed on the colonies, but recent history had shown otherwise. For ten years, the colonists had begged and pleaded and argued, but to no avail. There was nothing left but to fight—to take up arms, train the militia, and trust in God for support. Henry's voice rose as he came to his conclusion:

> Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, . . . give me liberty or give me death! [11]

After a few moments of stunned silence, Richard Henry Lee rose to offer a motion seconding Henry's resolution. Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Nelson, Jr., followed with supporting speeches. When the vote was taken, Henry's resolution passed, 65 to 60, and the colony began to prepare for war. As Henry had prophesied, "the next gale" that swept from the north brought news of the fighting at Lexington and Concord, and the war began.

Henry had not written his speech in advance, nor was it transcribed at the time, and contemporary witnesses wrote precious little about it in their diaries and letters. It echoed in their minds, however, until in the first quarter of the next century, a budding biographer of Henry contacted them to ask their help in reconstructing the speech. The reconstructed text first appeared in print in November 1817, when William Wirt's biography of the orator was published. Before long, some critics charged that the famous speech was as much a product of Wirt's imagination as the cherry tree story was a fantasy of Washington's early biographer, Parson Weems.

In late 1817, following quickly on the success of his *Life of Patrick Henry,* Wirt was chosen to become United States attorney General by President James Monroe, which necessitated the family's move to Washington in the winter of 1817. The Wirts left Richmond without selling their house and instead rented it to Judge William Cabell, Elizabeth's brother-in-law and William's close friend who had assisted him with transcribing recollections for his *Life of Patrick Henry*[12]. On 2 March 1818, the Wirts sold their home to Benjamin Tate, and did not return to Richmond.

Literary Significance of William Wirt

Prior to the Civil War, Richmond was the most important center of letters in the South. The city produced several literary journals of note, while the more learned citizens were avid readers of *avant-garde* international publications such as the *Edinburgh Review*. To the modern reader, Richmond may appear of minor significance in the development of a national literature – one thinks instead of the contributions of Massachusetts and New York. In fact, the early proto-Romantic writing in Richmond in the opening decade of the nineteenth century began the antiquarian and elegiac strains in Virginia literature that elevated local literary production to international importance - the poetry of Poe, the plantation novel and its progeny, the Lost Cause mythology. These are all forms of Romantic literature with roots in Virginia and with a peculiarly Virginian interpretation, but which found popularity on an international stage.

The first stirrings of Romantic writing in Virginia began with the writings of William Wirt, who tapped into Romantic tropes two decades before Romanticism is generally acknowledged as an element of Virginian literary production. Wirt's *The British Spy*, which appeared in 1803, and the succeeding essays, *Old Bachelor* and *Rainbow*, were incredibly influential and well received throughout the nation. They were frequently imitated from the time of their publication to the advent of the Civil War; on the strength of which, "Wirt has been called on good authority the most influential and widely read essayist of his generation in America."[13]

William Wirt was the leader of a loosely connected group of essayists at whose center sat the General Assembly and Supreme Court of Appeals. This group of erudite lawyers - including, among others, John Randolph, Francis Walker Gilmer, Abel P. Upshur, Dabney Carr, and Littleton W. Tazewell[14] - collected in Richmond when either body was in session. Their leisure time was spent discussing literary developments in Britain and writing their own essays, either for publication or private circulation. This Richmond literary group was by no means a formally arranged entity, but rather was akin to the coffeehouse culture of eighteenth-century London, based in this instance on the shared connections of political life.

Although not an intellectually cohesive group, the almost uniform consumption of the *Edinburgh Review* contributed to the general intellectual tone. A Whig publication, the *Edinburgh Review* – first published in 1802 - was perhaps the most influential in the dissemination and development of Romanticism in the Anglophone world. The *Review* viciously attacked Byron's *Hours of Idleness* of 1807, spawning a feud that resulted in the publication of Byron's satirical work, *English Bards and Scottish Reviewers*. The publication was critical of the Lake School and was the initial point of entry for German Romantic philosophy in Britain. Sir Walter Scott was a frequent contributor. In other words, the *Edinburgh Review* was at the center of literary developments in Britain as British literature was developing from Classical to Romantic. Moreover, it is these developments and literary debates which were central to the Richmond essayists.

Wirt was by far the most influential and widely read of the Richmond literati. The importance of Wirt's writings lies in their movement away from the classical tradition that was prevalent in Virginia at the time. While Virginia literature at the beginning of the nineteenth century was still strongly in the Enlightenment tradition, Wirt was the first to take Romantic strains from Britain and utilize them in his work. Wirt's work was not a complete break with an Enlightenment tradition, and he lists several classicists as being among his favorite poets in letters to friends. However, it is his interest in the British Romantics – Byron, Scott, the elder Disraeli, Burns, Ossian[15] and the Edinburgh Reviewers – which influences his turn towards a more Romantic form. In particular, Wirt admired the work of Sir Walter Scott, and there are many similarities between their work. Rather than looking to a classical

past as the measure of perfection and beauty, Scott explores local Scottish history and folklore for his tales, creating a historical fiction that mythologizes a national past rather than a classical one. This element is strong in the Romantic literature of any nation and it is responsible, in large part, for the rise of nationalism and the concepts of nation, race and folk culture as individual, separate and exclusive in the nineteenth century.

This Romantic antiquarian strain appears in Wirt's work with *The British Spy* of 1803. In it, Wirt makes his first attempt at mythologizing Virginia's past, creating a historical fiction as a celebration of regional history. The popularity of this essay is extremely important as, "the Spy allowed his creator to hark back to Virginia's glorious past, to sigh for the days of yore, and thus begin a romanticizing of that past in a manner which led to the plantation novel." [16]

The plantation novel has been seen as a Highland Novel outfitted in Southern clothing, but this is not entirely the case. Wirt laid the foundation for this important literary type more than a decade earlier. *The British Spy* romanticizes Virginia's history and creates a local folk-culture eleven years before Scott did so with Scottish culture in *Waverley*.

Scott's influence on the development of the plantation novel cannot be discounted, but it must be acknowledged that Wirt's popular work predated Scott's and had a large popular following. His influence should not be underestimated on the development of this important literary form.

Although a full analysis of the plantation novel's significance is beyond the scope of this nomination, one need only think of the enduring popularity of Margaret Mitchell's 1936 novel, *Gone With the Wind* - the best-selling work of fiction ever published - to recognize the importance of the plantation novel's place in Anglophone literature. The cotton plantation of
the Deep South as a setting for the plantation novel is a post-bellum manifestation of the type that began as an elegy for Virginia in the antebellum period. Virginia's tobacco-based economy failed long before the Civil War, and by the 1830s authors were already writing elegiac novels about a recent Virginia past which was all but lost.

Virginia's history was easily manipulated to fit into a Romantic framework. Her ties with the English aristocracy, a tradition of farming and, hence, an organic connection with both community and the soil of the motherland meshed neatly with the conservative view of society, a benevolent paternalism, seen in the Highland Novels of Sir Walter Scott. (Proponents and apologists of slavery would later exploit the view of the plantation as a society of conservative paternalism.) Conversely, the important role of Virginians in the Revolution and early history of the republic fit the more radical, liberal politics of the Cockney School or the French or German Romantics.

Wirt was able to envision Virginia's past in both these Romantic guises. For his *Life of Patrick Henry*, Wirt chose a shadowy figure of international renown and solidified him as an enduring Romantic hero. Wirt's work on Patrick Henry is immensely problematic; however, its flaws as a history reveal its genius as a work of Romantic fiction. Begun as a historical work, Wirt quickly realized that he would not have enough material to complete the project as he had initially hoped:

> It was all speaking, speaking, speaking. 'Tis true he could talk – Gods how he *could* talk! but there is no acting the while…And then, to make the matter worse, from 1763 to 1789…not one of his speeches lives in print, writing or memory. All that is told me is, that on such and such an occasion, he made a distinguished speech…[T]here are some ugly traits in H[enry]'s character, and some pretty nearly as ugly blanks. He was a blank military commander, a blank governor, and a blank politician, in all those useful points which depend on composition and detail. In short, it is, verily, as hopeless a subject as man could well desire. [17]

Moreover, Henry was by no means the unalloyed patriot, defender of liberty and egalitarian that Wirt initially believed him to be and would portray him as in the book. In actuality, Henry's motivation was often self-serving and opportunistic. Fear of slave uprisings, rather than higher philosophical ideas of liberty, motivated his march

on the capital at Williamsburg with the Hanover County militia.[18] As one of the largest slaveholders in Hanover County, Henry was disturbed by the rumors of slave rebellions in Spring 1775. The Royal governor, Lord Dunmore, seized the powder magazine in Williamsburg, securing it initially from the threat of rebel slaves then, as word of the approaching militia reached the capital, from the threat of rebel colonists. Then, in a move he would repeat later that year, Lord Dunmore offered freedom to slaves that rose up against the colonists. Henry's confrontation with the Crown's government was not a quixotic quest – an honest farmer leading his neighbors to confront the British monarchy – but an attempt to secure his property, human or otherwise. Dramatic though the situation sounds, the British offered to pay for the powder seized and rescind their overtures to the slave population, and the militia went home satisfied.

In truth, the paucity of source material available to Wirt was by far his greatest asset. He did not have to stick closely to facts that did not suit his literary agenda, but could mold Henry to suit his needs. Patrick Henry was aggressive in his attempts to acquire vast tracts of Native lands. As Ray Raphael has argued, it is "highly unlikely that in his efforts to arouse public opinion against Britain, which had tried to close the frontier to white settlement, Patrick Henry would not make use of the prevailing anti-Indian sentiments."[19] Yet no mention of either the native or slave populations – both important issues to Henry – appears in any of his speeches. There is not "a hint of pandering to instincts less noble than the love of liberty. His speeches, quite literally, have been whitewashed."[20]

What Wirt created was a version of Patrick Henry as Romantic hero rather than egalitarian patriot. It should be noted that it took Wirt 12 years to complete the biography, during which time his literary influences became much more strongly Romantic. The project began in 1805 and developed over the 15 years during which he was exposed to the work of Byron and Scott as well as the Romantic Movement through the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*. It was during this same time that Romanticism flourished and took hold in Britain, as well as the rest of Europe. By the time Wirt had completed his biography, popular revolution and radical social reform had become mainstays of Romantic thought. And while the American Revolution had been a revolution based on Enlightenment philosophical thought, it had since been absorbed into Romantic culture. What had been a rather gentlemanly revolution begun as a disagreement over the system of taxation became the perfect expression of Romantic revolt – country-born philosophers, unsullied by the enervating influences of urban European society, rose up against their corrupt oppressors to fight for the concept of liberty.

Meanwhile, the major players of the Revolution had gone from citizens (Enlightenment) to heroes (Romantic). Enlightenment thinking emphasized the citizen and elevated thinking about the good of the collective society, while Romanticism upheld the individual, created the idea of the genius, recreated the ideal of personal existence as *le moi romantique*. Patrick Henry and his fellow Revolutionaries were already popular heroes at home and abroad when Wirt began his biography. By the time he had finished, the American Revolutionaries had undergone a Romantic transformation in popular and literary culture, and his representation of Henry was not immune to this rather appealing trend.

Thomas Jefferson and John Randolph, among others who had known Henry personally, were baffled by the portrait of Patrick Henry presented in Wirt's book. "Most interesting of all was the reaction of Thomas Jefferson, who for a decade had contributed to Wirt his reminiscences of Henry. 'You have certainly vigorously practiced the precept' of speaking only good of the dead, he wrote to Wirt…To others, Jefferson was more critical: 'It is a poor book, written in bad taste, and gives an imperfect idea of Patrick Henry.'"[21]

It should be noted that neither Jefferson nor Randolph was an admirer of Patrick Henry, and both had expected a more even history than the one presented by Wirt. Others, however, judged the book correctly as a work of Romantic fiction, rather than as a work of historic scholarship, and as an attempt to immortalize a flawed political figure as a Romantic hero. One correspondent of Wirt's own biographer stated that, as a friend of Patrick Henry's, he enjoyed Wirt's biography more than he had anything written by Scott[22] – a comparison which reveals that some contemporaries were able to recognize the work as literary rather than a work of historical scholarship.

Wirt's biography became an instant popular success and was reprinted twenty-five times over the half-century after it appeared. In a nice bit of transatlantic Romantic symmetry, Lord Byron discussed Wirt's biography with his portraitist while sitting for his last life portrait - painted in Italy by minor Kentucky painter, William Edward West. In his private notes, the painter writes, "He had seen a review of Wirt's life of Patrick Henry – was very anxious to get the life and begged me to inquire every where for it – thought that Patrick Henry might come in well as a third with Washington and Franklin."[23]

The difficulty, however, lies in unpacking the biography two centuries later. Despite its historical inaccuracies and its reliance on hearsay, it is some of the best information available to scholars of Patrick Henry. Wirt at least had access to Henry's acquaintances, even if he failed to represent it accurately. Bernard Mayo, writing on Wirt and the Patrick Henry mythology, writes:

> Much of the subsequent writing on Henry has been a process of 'de-Wirting' his overblown hero. In history seminars, scholars have long asked 'Did Patrick Henry say this or did William Wirt?' and 'Is it fact or is it Wirt?'[24]

Nor, for all its flaws, should the book be discounted as entirely fictitious. Although he tended to present Henry's motivations as cleaner than they were, it is still an accurate, if overdramatized, outline of his life. The difficulty is in discerning which is Wirt's plaster of Paris, and which are the skeletal facts on which he hung it.

This is particularly true when dealing with Wirt's renditions of Patrick Henry's speeches – by far the most popular and enduring passages in Wirt's book. As mentioned previously, not a single transcript survives of any of Patrick Henry's famous speeches. In order to reconstruct them, Wirt relied on the recollections of eyewitnesses who had been present during the "Liberty or Death" and "Treason" speeches some 40 years before. Out of these, he cobbled what we now know as those speeches, which live in popular history as the words of Patrick Henry himself.

However, as with the rest of the biography, it has the skeleton of Henry filled in with the oratory flair of Wirt. His correspondents supplied him with the outline of the speeches. Judge St. George Tucker supplied him with a "transcript" of the "Liberty or Death" speech that amounted to about 20% of the final transcript. The rest was a kind of literary mean taken of all the other accounts, dressed-up with all the oratorical fireworks Wirt himself could supply.

Since the publication of *Life of Patrick Henry*, other eyewitness accounts have appeared which support Wirt's general outline of the speeches. However, untouched by Wirt, they have a decidedly different tone. In general, the ideas are the same, but the letters suggest that Patrick Henry was not the Romantic hothead and rebel that Wirt made him out to be. He respectfully disagreed with the Crown – although he did disagree, and certainly made the call to arms for which he is so famous. London newspapers reported the speech, and a political cartoon printed in Britain in 1776 identifies American colonists by giving them hats with the phrase "Death or Liberty" emblazoned across them. It was, in Revolutionary parlance, the phrase heard 'round the world.

Of the two speeches Wirt included in his biography, the "Liberty or Death" speech is by far the most famous. In the nineteenth century, it was standard to require schoolchildren to memorize and recite the speech as part of their education. Even today, the speech is reprinted in more than half our history textbooks and is credited as Henry, not Wirt.[25] The final phrase, "Give me liberty, or give me death," has come to stand-in as the catchphrase for the Revolutionary War, as well as for the American political ideology overall. It is still a widely recognized element of American popular culture. The paraphrase "Live Free or Die" appears on New Hampshire's license plate, while the final installment of the popular *Die Hard* film series is entitled *Live Free or Die Hard* - surely proof of the lasting and wide-spread popularity of the speech amongst the general populace.

Summary

Though largely forgotten today, William Wirt exerted a powerful formative influence upon both our understanding of Patrick Henry's role in the American Revolution, as well as shaping United States legal culture in its early, impressionable days. Wirt remains the longest serving Attorney General in U.S. history. He served as a bridge between the generation of the Revolution and that of early nineteenth century America, conveying both the content and the spirit of 1776 to a new generation. As historian Burstein describes Wirt:

> Wirt arguably did more than anyone else of his generation to link the Romantic movement in America with the Revolutionary spirit. When all was said and done, it was Wirt whom the city of Washington selected to cap off the season of observances in 1826 with a masterful oration in the U.S. Capitol – Wirt, who had devoted his public career to furthering the work of the founders; Wirt, who admitted to having 'wept like a child' on reading newspaper accounts of Lafayette's welcome in 1824; Wirt, whose serialized essays, *Letters of the British Spy*, had much earlier established for him a reputation as a patriot susceptible to outbursts of emotion in defense of the national heart. But it was his *Life of Patrick Henry*, first published in 1817 (the same year that he received his appointment to the cabinet), that delivered the pathos and poignancy which gave him the credentials for conveying the general spectacle of the nation's jubilee.[26]

Criterion C (Architecture Justification)

The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is Richmond's only surviving double-bowed house built during the Federal era. Once part of a series of twenty-five other bowed houses in Virginia's capital, the Wirt House is the only one that remains. These Federal-era bowed houses became popular in Richmond for reasons of both fashion and function. The bows allowed multiple windows and thus light and greater views of gardens, streets, and in some cases, the James River.[27]

Architectural Significance - Virginia

The bow (curved as well as polygonal) was introduced into the Richmond architectural scene by Benjamin Henry Latrobe. Latrobe, the English-trained founder of the American architectural profession, lived in Virginia from 1796 to 1798. One of his earliest Richmond projects was the Harvie-Gambrel House, the house in which Elizabeth Gambrel, the second wife of William Wirt, was raised. For the first owners, the Harvies, Latrobe attempted to create the latest and best in cosmopolitan neoclassical design. Latrobe took a nascent tradition of bow windows in Richmond and took the English idea of a projecting central bow on the garden side and maximized it to take advantage of the striking views of the James. Latrobe expanded the motif of the single bow into a double bow with his design for Clifton, built 1808-9 in Richmond. Latrobe considered the design a critique of his Harvie-Gambrel house, and utilized a pair of projecting bows (which he had earlier employed in his Virginia State Penitentiary, Richmond, 1797-1806) to capture commanding views of the city and the James. One innovation at Clifton that bore architectural fruit in Richmond was the development of the twin bows framing a porch.[28]

This bow began a long series of like adaptations in Richmond, including the Wickham-Valentine House (NHL), designed by Latrobe's informal apprentice Alexander Parris in 1811-13. Other examples include the demolished Moldavia, the childhood home of Edgar Allen Poe, located diagonally across the intersection from the Wirt House.[29] Further Richmond examples include the Alexander McRae House (demolished), which featured the same twin bows framing a porch as Clifton, and which in turn which bore an uncanny resemblance to Lynchburg's Point of Honor, which featured the same double bow framing a porch. Point of Honor and the Wirt House are the only surviving Federal-era double-bowed houses in Virginia.[30] The William Wirt House is perhaps the most sophisticated example of this Federal-era double-bow tradition in Richmond, and the only one to survive.

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description
The boundary description for the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House is City of Richmond Tax Parcel Map Reference Number W0000023011. This is the same information as noted in Deed Book 00824, Page 1525 dated 1/5/1983.

Boundary Justification
These boundaries include the land historically associated with the Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House.

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End Notes

[1] For a more detailed physical description of the Wirt house, see Karri Lynn Jurgens,"The Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House, Richmond, 1808-1809." Thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2000.
[2]Bernard Mayo, *Myths and Men: Patrick Henry, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959): 18.
[3] Gregory K. Glassner,. *Adopted Son: The Life, Wit & Wisdom of William Wirt, 1772–1834*. (Hood, Va.: Kurt-Ketner Publishing Co., 1997), 1-2.
[4] William Wirt, "Preface," *Life of Patrick Henry* (1817. Rpt. Philadelphia: John H. Winston Co., n.d.), v-vi.
[5] Wirt, "Preface," *Life of Patrick Henry*, x.
[6] A significant portion of Wirt's interest in Henry was surely personal. Wirt's description of young Henry as "So far was he, indeed, from exhibiting any one prognostic of this greatness, that every omen foretold a life, at best, of mediocrity, if not insignificance. His person is represented as having been coarse, his manners uncommonly awkward, his dress slovenly, his conversation very plain, his aversion to study invincible, and his faculties almost entirely benumbed by indolence," could easily have been an autobiographical description of the young William Wirt. Wirt, *Life of Patrick Henry*, 24
[7] Wirt, "Preface*," Life of Patrick Henry*, v-xiii.
[8] Elizabrth Wirt to William Wirt, Washington, D.C., 12 January 1816, William Wirt Papers, 1786-1850, Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland. Microfilm edition, 1985.
[9] Wirt, *Life of Patrick Henry*, 137.
[10] Wirt, *Life of Patrick Henry*, 138-139.
[11] Wirt, *Life of Patrick Henry*, 141-2.
[12] Wirt, "Preface," *Life of Patrick Henry*, ix.
[13] Richard Beale Davis, "Literary Tastes in Virginia Before Poe," *William and Mary College Quarterly Historical Magazine* 19, no. 1 (1939): 58.
[14] Davis, "Literary Tastes in Virginia Before Poe," 56.
[15] The Ossian cycle of poems was a controversial, but highly influential work. It appeared in the second half of the 18th century as a collection of ancient Gaelic works written by Ossian, discovered and translated by James Macpherson. Macpherson had, in fact, written them himself. The poems were based on ancient ballads but were entirely reworked for modern tastes. Ossian had an enormous impact on the development of Romantic literature, British or otherwise. Goethe included translated passages in his *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. Early in the Sturm und Drang Movement – the proto-Romantic movement in Germany – Johann Herder published an influential essay on Ossian in Germany.
[16] Davis, "Literary Tastes in Virginia Before Poe," 58.
[17] Ray Raphael, *Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past* (New York: New Press, 2004): 147.
[18] Raphael, *Founding Myths*, 151-3.
[19] ibid., 154.
[20] ibid.
[21] Mayo, *Myths and Men,* 19.
[22] Davis, "Literary Tastes in Virginia Before Poe," 59.
[23] West, William Edward, "Painting Lord Byron: An Account by William Edward West." Edited with an introduction by Estill Curtis Pennington. *Archives of American Art Journal* 24, no. 2 (1984): 20.
[24] Bernard Mayo, *Myths and Men*, 15.
[25] Raphael, *Founding Myths*, 156.
[26] Burstein, 35; Wirt to Dabney Carr, 20 August 1815, in Kennedy, *Memoirs of the Life of William Wirt*, I:388.
[27] Karri L. Jurgens, "Alexander McRae House," in Bryan Clark Green, Calder Loth, and William M.S. Rasmussen, *Lost Virginia: Vanished Architecture of the Old Dominion* (Charlottesville: Virginia Historical Society – Howell Press, 2001), 51.
[28] Brownell and Jurgens, "Clifton," *Lost Virginia*, 50-1.
[29] Charles E. Brownell, "Harvie-Gambrel House," *Lost Virginia,*39-40, and Brownell and Jurgens, "Moldavia," *Lost Virginia*, 41.
[30] Jurgens, "Alexander McRae House," *Lost Virginia,* 51.

Hancock-Wirt-Caskie House

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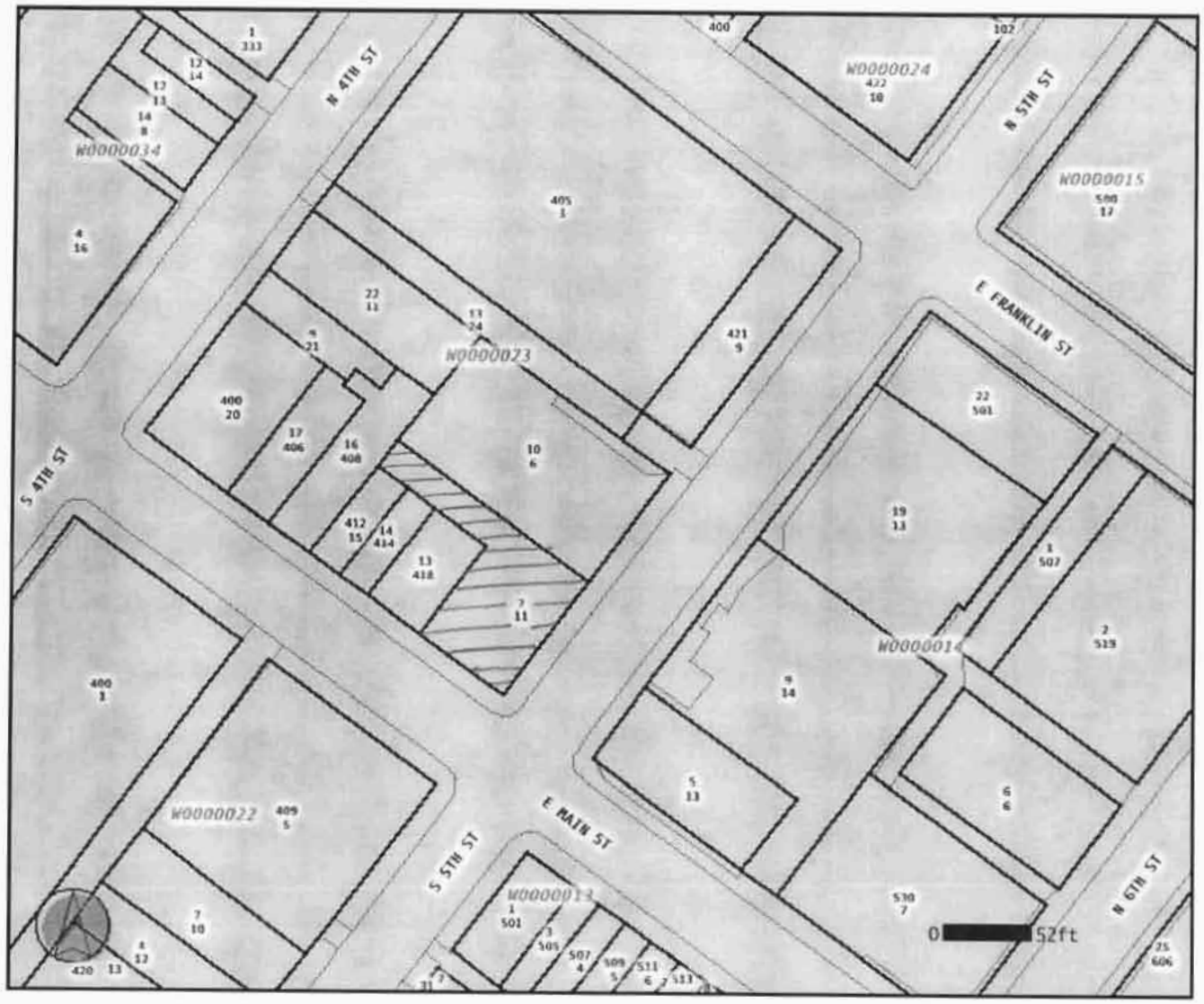

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